



No. 14 K-State spikers hand Colorado 3rd loss in row

Bufs winless since upsetting No. 2 Nebraska

By Ryan Thorburn

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Colorado hosts Missouri on Saturday in a matchup of volleyball teams that have a total of 12 wins this season and are 6-9 in the Big 12.

Perhaps the Buffs should pretend the Tigers are the No. 1 team in the country.

Two weeks after upsetting No. 2 Nebraska in four sets, CU gave No. 14 Kansas State a good fight on Wednesday before allowing the Wildcats to escape the Coors Events Center with a 23-25, 25-20, 25-18, 27-25 victory.

"What's crazy is that we obviously play better against ranked teams, which is interesting," senior Alex Buth said. "We just need to have that mentality every game, no matter if they're ranked or not."

The Buffs (12-12) have lost three consecutive matches since handing the Cornhuskers their only loss of the season. Pi'i Aiu's team will probably have to win four of its final five in order to be invited to the NCAA tournament.

"I think if we can play like we did tonight we'll beat some teams. I just think we've got to compete a little more inspired than we're competing," Aiu said. "We've got to take the opportunities we get and we can't have safe plays. We have to think about killing every ball we get a chance at and digging every ball we get a chance at. There's got to be a sense of urgency here."

CU led the first set 24-18 after a kill by Emilee Sisco, but the Wildcats went on a 5-0 run to put the pressure on. Buth finally put an end to the potential collapse with a clinching kill.

"The first game was awesome. We played above them the whole time," Buth said. "We're just a roller coaster team."

The Wildcats (22-5, 12-4) cruised through the next two sets and were leading 24-22 before Lauren Schaefer fought off two match points with a kill and a block to tie the score.

After what appeared to be a hitting error by Kansas State, the home team thought it was about to serve for a chance to force a fifth set when the official overturned the call and gave the Wildcats the point and a 25-24 lead.

"I think the explanation is the Big 12 does not allow us to comment on officiating," Aiu said. "And we'll

leave it at that."

CU fought off the ensuing match point but could not finish the comeback.

"I definitely think we need to step up our game and play more consistently. We have to pick up wins every time that we go out," said Schylur Edelman, who finished with 11 kills for the Buffs. "We have to be ready to win and ready to fight. We have to pick up games now to go to the NCAAs. We're going to have to fight for it."

CU's match against Missouri at the Coors Events Center will start at 2 p.m.

"I am disappointed with the result, but we are competing better. We've got to learn to compete that way night in and night out, not just when big teams come in here and we get fired up for them," Aiu said. "They've got to get fired up for everybody because you only get so many games in a season and in your life."



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